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# Earthquake in the Foreign Relations Committee

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AROUND THE WALLS of the conference room of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the Capitol are the photographs of the committee chairmen back across the years. These men were the focus of power in America's dealings with the rest of the world, the lines of their authority running back to state, district, township, to the forks of the creek in a simpler time.

Something is happening to the lines of communication today. Even in the quiet of the conference room with its big green baize table there is audible the distant rumbling of a political earthquake threatening to shatter them entirely.

Call it a new isolationism or, in the gut language of George C. Wallace, just fed up with all those foreigners who never help us, the very base of American foreign policy in the postwar years is in jeopardy. The name of the game covering a broad range of action has been foreign aid. The premise was that the rich nations, with the United States the richest of all, were duty-bound to share a part of their wealth through loans and grants for the new developing nations. Without such sharing the rich nations on the small island of affluence in Western Europe and the United States and Canada will be overwhelmed by violence and disorder among three-fourths of the world's people living in hopeless poverty.

ONE OF THE MEANS for sharing the wealth is the International Development Association, an affiliate of the World Bank created to make soft loans to struggling new nations. IDA makes loans for 50 years without interest with no repayment required for the

first 10 years. The United States contracted with the other have nations to provide \$480,000,000—\$160,000,000 a year for three years—for IDA.

But now poor IDA is in grave trouble. Members of the Foreign Relations Committee who formerly pledged their support are opposed or uncertain. It seems impossible to get a quorum so that a vote can be taken to move the authorization onto the Senate floor. The future if IDA ever reaches the floor is dark and dubious.

Conscientious Senators who in the past have supported the over-all policy grumble about how tight money and hard loans stand in the way of development programs here at home. Sen. Albert Gore of Tennessee talked in a lengthy committee session of how a high school in his home town could not get funds to put in a proper sewerage line so that a playing field would not be a health hazard. And yet here we are proposing to make money available for countries around the world without any interest charge and no payments for 10 years.

The proposed capital for the new Asian bank is in trouble. The House Appropriations Committee has just cut President Johnson's requested \$2.9 billion for foreign aid nearly in half. Whacking at every phase of the program, the Committee cut the requested technical and cooperation loans for South American nations from \$625,000,000 to \$365,000,000.

While all this goes on, with the Foreign Relations Committee staff trying hard to keep the train on the tracks, the chairman is in his native Arkansas fighting for survival. Sen. J. William Fulbright faces a challenge to his authority—to his views on foreign policy as they are perceived by the public—that

is part of the earthquake threatening the established political structure.

Charles Bernard, Fulbright's Republican opponent, a wealthy planter-businessman, charges him with being "soft on Communism." He wants to recognize Red China. He gives aid and comfort to the enemy in Vietnam. He is for trade relations with the Communist countries in Eastern Europe. That is the indictment contained in a 300,000 mailing out of state appealing for funds. A similar mailing of 275,000 is shortly to go within Arkansas.

THERE IS EVIDENCE that this is part of a nationally organized movement to reverse American policy in favor of a hard-line anti-Communist isolationism. H. L. Hunt, the well-advertised Texas billionaire, boasting that he replaced moderate Sen. Thomas Kuchel with flaming, hard-line Max Rafferty in California's Republican primary, says he will do the same thing with Fulbright.

Hunt is out for Wallace. While his claims of big-money contributions rarely match the reports of candidates' finance chairmen, in his crepuscular fashion he stimulates other oil-rich contributors. The paradox in Arkansas in this strangest of political years is that apparently many voters for Wallace will also vote for Fulbright—bumper stickers link the two names.

Currently 82 nations are receiving foreign aid, a few such as India and Pakistan large amounts, the rest dribblets. Serious observers believe that part of the disillusion and frustration may grow from the fact that the program has never been revised and reappraised. It has grown like a spreading banyan tree throwing down roots here, there and everywhere.

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